

Date Mailed
September 25, 2001

BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

Second Petition of Customers of the Niagara Exchange of Niagara
Telephone Company for Extended Area Service with the Iron
Mountain Exchange of Ameritech Michigan

4160-TV-102

NOTICE OF HEARING

Hearing Date:	October 9, 2001 – 1:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
Hearing Location:	St. Anthony's Church, 1432 River Street, Niagara, WI

On March 14, 2000, the Commission received a petition from approximately 567 customers of the Niagara exchange of Niagara Telephone Company. The petition requested extended area service (EAS) with the Iron Mountain, Michigan exchange, consisting of telephone numbers beginning with 774, 776, and 779 in area code 906. The number of signatures was sufficient to warrant further consideration under Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 167.05(1). A Notice of Proceeding and Investigation and Assessment of Costs was issued April 11, 2000.

By its Decision issued June 20, 2001, the Commission approved rates on which customers would be balloted regarding their willingness to pay for one-way EAS to Iron Mountain. The rates approved were a charge of \$3.58 per month on all customer lines and a charge of \$.15 for each call placed to the Iron Mountain exchange. Ballots were mailed in early August, 2001, with a deadline of August 31, 2001, for postmark of the returned ballots.

The results of the balloting are:

YES	490
NO	403
No preference indicated	<u>4</u>
Ballots returned timely	897
Ballots returned late	<u>1</u>
Ballots returned	898
Ballots not returned	<u>344</u>
Total Ballots Mailed to Customers	1,242

The section of the EAS rules relating to the treatment of the results of balloting¹ is currently under suspension by the legislature's Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules. The next step in the process is therefore a public hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to provide the Commission with information on the factors it is to consider in determining

¹ The suspended rule is Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 167.08(2).

whether to grant or deny the petition for EAS:² adequacy of existing telephone service between the exchanges, costs and benefits of the proposed service, and community of interest between the exchanges.

NOTICE IS GIVEN that a hearing will be held on October 9, 2001, at 1:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. in St. Anthony's Church, 1432 River Street, Niagara, Wisconsin. This building is accessible to people in wheelchairs. Parking for people with disabilities is available. Any person with a disability who needs accommodations should contact the docket coordinator listed below.

The Niagara Telephone Company shall provide notification of this hearing to its Niagara exchange customers. Notification may be provided by mail, as part of a regular billing, or by publication in a newspaper in general circulation in the area. Niagara Telephone Company shall provide proof of notice at the hearing.

Any person desiring to become a party shall file a request pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 227.44(2m) and Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 2.32(3) no later than 14 days from the date of this notice. The request shall be addressed to Administrative Law Judge David C. Whitcomb, Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, P.O. Box 7854, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7854.

The Commission does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the provision of programs, services, or employment. Any person with a disability who needs accommodations to participate in this proceeding or who needs to obtain this document in a different format should contact the docket coordinator listed below.

Questions from the media may be directed to Jeffrey L. Butson, Public Affairs Director at (608) 267-0912.

Questions regarding this matter may be directed to docket coordinator Thomas A. Gross at (608) 267-2337.

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, _____

By the Commission:

Lynda L. Dorr
Secretary to the Commission

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² See Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 167.09(2).